



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.  
Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
1110 Federal Building  
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31 Hopkins Plaza  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.



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April 9, 1979

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Mr. George R. Alexander, Jr.,  
Regional Administrator  
Environmental Protection Agency  
230 S. Dearborn Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

EPA REGION 5  
OFFICE OF REGIONAL  
ADMINISTRATION

Dear Mr. Alexander:

I recently received a memo from one of our investigators concerning a situation that may be of interest to your agency. The text of this memo appears below. The names of the foreman-informant and our investigator are available on request.

"During the course of an official OSHA Section 11(c) discrimination investigation, I have discovered a situation that might constitute either an illegal dumping of toxic and/or carcinogenic chemicals and/or a potentially serious health hazard to persons in proximity to the dumping.

The company involved is Shippers Car Line, Division of A. C. Industries Inc. The plant is located at 100 Trendley Avenue, East St. Louis, Illinois 62201, (618-271-7472). The primary function of the East St. Louis facility is the repair of damaged rail cars.

During the process of repairing the damaged rail cars, it was brought to my attention that on numerous occasions rail cars are received for repair with known and unknown commodities, generally chemicals. It was alluded to that these commodities are taken outside of the plant and flushed out of the rail cars either into a holding pond or simply onto the ground. It should be noted that the Mississippi River is approximately one-quarter mile from the alleged dumping sites.

The case in point occurred on or about January 31, 1979 and does not appear to be a chance occurrence, but rather just one of a continuing series of dumpings. On this date a damaged rail hopper car was received for repair. The car had cancer warning labels conspicuously displayed. Upon entry into the car, commodity spilled out onto the ground in the plant. Discussion took place between employees and various foremen as to the identity of the commodity. It appears at least one employee refused to work in

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Page 2  
April 9, 1979


contact with the commodity until such time as it could be identified. The commodity remained unidentified and the rail car was subsequently transferred out of the plant. At this point most employees felt that the rail car had been returned to the leasee for cleaning. However, during the course of my interview of a foreman the question as to the disposition of the commodity was voiced. The foreman indicated the rail car had been transported outside of the plant at which time the unknown commodity was discharged onto the ground.

As indicated earlier, this dumping appears to be a common occurrence at the East St. Louis facility. Several employees indicated that it was common knowledge throughout the plant that known and unknown commodities are regularly discharged onto the ground with little or no regard whatsoever for the potential consequences. Several employees indicated that former employees of the plant seem to have a far higher than normal occurrence of cancer.

It is my opinion that this potentially serious matter should be immediately brought to the attention of that agency or agencies having jurisdiction over chemical discharging in order that the health and safety of the employees of Shippers Car Line and those persons living in the surrounding area can be fully protected."

If we can be of further assistance to you, please advise.

Sincerely,



August A. Denhard, Jr.  
Operations Review Officer-East  
Telephone: 301-962-4325 (FTS 922-4325)

cc: Bagdy